



YALE-CHINA ASSOCIATION

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CHINA AND THE DOCUMENTARY ART

Press Release

For Immediate Release.

The Yale-China Association, in conjunction with its Student Committee, is pleased to announce an eight-part documentary film series of films produced in the west on contemporary China entitled "CHINA AND THE DOCUMENTARY ART." Each session of the series will present themes ranging from current political affairs and city life to religious trends and cultural festivals. Contemporary China has experienced rapid change in many sectors of society in recent years. A diversified series of this type is one important way for those interested in current themes and events in China to become rapidly updated regarding recent trends and developments.

The complete program for this film series is as follows:

September 27: "CHINA IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE"

"Misunderstanding China" -- the 1972 CBS documentary which reassesses our knowledge and perceptions of China and the Chinese people. This film was shown with great success as part of last year's film series, "Hollywood's China: Perceptions and Misperceptions." Rescheduled by popular request!

"The Ancient Chinese" -- a short film that describes the development of Chinese civilization from the earliest times.

"China: The Enduring Heritage" -- the summary film of a thirteen part film series on ancient Chinese art, culture and civilization.

"China: Coming of the West" -- an important summary film that outlines the confrontation between the western powers and the Chinese nation.

October 4: "ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY CHINESE POLITICS"

"China: A Class By Itself" -- a superb, 1979 NBC documentary which attempts to understand China's political and economic goals for the year 2000, analyzes the changes in the Chinese educational system and compares it to the American educational system.

"Looking For Mao" -- a 1983 documentary focussing on current political developments and attitudes produced by Irv Drasnin, formerly of CBS Television. This film, produced for the PBS Frontline Program, presents one of the most vivid portraits of current political developments and attitudes.

October 11: "THE CITIES OF CHINA"

"Xian" -- the first of a three-film series, "Xian" describes the importance of the ancient city of Chang-an and provides an awesome display of Xian's artistic and archeological grandeur, including the burial tomb of China's first emperor, Qin Shi Huang Di.

"Suzhou" -- this 28-minute gem captures many of Suzhou's gardens and landscapes as well as the importance of the surrounding "land of rice and fish."

"Beijing" -- the final part of the trilogy produced by Sue Yung Li and Shirley Sun, "Beijing" conveys the texture and flavor of the venerable Chinese capital through the lives of several of its inhabitants.

"Hong Kong Today" -- presents an overview of the colony of Hong Kong, detailing the geography, economy and culture while focussing on the expression of people's values.

October 18: "CHINESE SOCIAL ISSUES AND DILEMMAS"

"China: Land of Farmers" -- a 1983 slide-tape production, this presentation provides a specific look at Chinese agriculture and rural life.

"China: The Urban Dwellers" -- part of the same, four-part production, this slideshow examines the rapidly changing face of Chinese cities and the fabric and nature of urban life.

"China: Year of the Counting" -- a 1983 production by the United Nations Film Unit, this visually beautiful film chronicles China's 1982 census and explores the social and political issues reflected in China's demographic reality.

"China Eyes" -- a PBS documentary produced by R.V.Grinblatt which illustrates medical practices and issues in China today with special attention to the care and treatment of eye disorders. The film's producer will be present to introduce the production and to describe his experiences in producing this documentary.

October 25: "CHINESE ART AND CULTURE"

"Forbidden City" -- an NBC crew follows a worker and his family through Beijing's Forbidden City which is now houses China's artistic treasures and serves as the central park area for Beijing. There is extensive coverage of Beijing's urban history and of the last days of the Qing Dynasty. A timeless film.

"Stilt Dancers of Long Bow Village" -- banned during the Cultural Revolution, the art of stilt dancing has now been revived. A village festival presents a glimpse of this almost lost folk art. This excellent documentary, produced by Carma Hinton and Richard Gordon, was filmed under unprecedented circumstances, without interpreters or officials present, and "captures the people with an informality and spontaneity no other film on China can match."

"Return From Silence" -- a superb documentary about five leading Chinese writers whose work have had an important influence on the development of modern China. Interviews are intercut with rare historical footage.

"Art After Mao" -- a recently produced slideshow which examines the development of the graphic arts since the death of Mao and the overthrow of the "Gang of Four."

"Chinese Brush Strokes" -- the history and technique of the calligraphic art, Chinese writing.

November 1 -- "RELIGION IN CHINA"

"Tibetan Buddhism: Cycles of Interdependance" -- shot during the four seasons of the year, this film contains spectacular scenes of Ladakh's beautiful landscape. It observes the annual cycle of the symbiotic relationship between religious and secular activities and documents how Buddhist families incorporate ethical precepts, prayers and rituals into their daily lives for healing the sick, planting and harvesting their crops and warding off evil spirits.

"Ever Faithful, Ever Sure: Christian Communities in China" -- this 1983 filmstrip with audio tape provides a look at contemporary Protestantism in China and describes recent developments in the China Christian Council and the Three-Self Patriotic Movement.

"China Mission: The Chester Ronning Story" -- horse-breaker, homesteader, diplomat, politician and teacher, Chester Ronning grew up as the son of missionaries in China. He experienced the Boxer Rebellion and the civil war there, and as a diplomat tried to bring to the West an understanding of China. Produced by the National Film of Canada, this beautifully shot film was written by Audrey Topping, grand-daughter of Chester Ronning.

November 8: "PATTERNS OF DAILY LIFE IN CHINA"

"Gui Dao -- On The Way" -- a trilogy, produced by the National Film Board of Canada that combines an unusual collection of vignettes that show daily life and work life in China.

"Some Chinese Women Told Us..." -- insights into Chinese society abound in this documentary, which shows the lives of women who work unloading freight trains in Wuchang Station, Hubei Province. The pace of the film reflects the serenity of its subjects and the conspicuous absence of Western-style stress.

"A Station on the Yangzi" -- daily life in a busy train station proves rich in clues to understanding Chinese culture. The scene is Wuchang with its population of four million people. Its relentless activity acts as a backdrop for a personal look at the memories of age and the hopes of youth: a retiring train worker and his daughter who will reluctantly replace him.

"Round Trip to Beijing" -- the enormous differences between the Chinese and Western cultures unfold as the film follows a railway worker, Wang Shaoying, from her distinctively Chinese commitment to work to her family life where the small hopes and dreams of a people are expressed.

THE PROGRAMS WILL BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE LINSLEY-CHITTENDEN HALL, ROOM 102, NEAR THE CORNER OF CHAPEL AND HIGH STREETS ON THE YALE CAMPUS. ADMISSION WILL BE \$3.00 FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC, \$2.00 FOR THOSE WITH A YALE ID.

THERE WILL BE TWO ADDITIONAL SPECIAL SHOWINGS ON NOV. 12th AND 13th IN COOPERATION WITH THE YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY OF THE CHINESE FEATURE FILM, "MONKEY MAKES HAVOC IN HEAVEN."

November 12 & 13:

"Monkey Makes Havoc in Heaven" -- one of the best of the full length animated cartoons from the People's Republic of China. This is a superb rendering of the folk tale of how the Monkey King, Sun Wu-king, turned the Celestial Kingdom upside down. He flouted its conventions; gate-crashed the banquet of the gods, eating the peaches of eternal youth, gobbling up the Pills of Immortality, routing the heavenly hosts sent to chastise him; and surrounded by his monkey followers on the Mountain of Flowers and Fruit, proclaimed himself "Great Sage Equal of Heaven". The film has elements of the famous Disney whimsy, but it also has a typically robust modern Chinese humor and style. Very well done.

THIS FILM WILL BEGIN AT 2:30pm IN THE GALLERY LECTURE HALL, ENTER ON HIGH STREET OFF CHAPEL STREET. ADMISSION TO THESE TWO SPECIAL SHOWINGS WILL BE FREE.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT ANY OF THE SESSIONS OF THE SERIES, CONTACT THE YALE-CHINA ASSOCIATION AT 436-4422.

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